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CHAPTER XXII

EDUCATION FOR CITIZENSHIP

871 AS education in the widest sense must be described all efforts, organized or otherwise, which tend to impart to individuals habitual forms of acting and thinking. Understood in this sense, every social institution involves educational activities by means of which individuals are led to acquire the behaviour-patterns that make up the institution. Thus our description of economic life has involved the description of certain educational techniques—the training in productive methods, the imparting of economic knowledge, or of concepts of property and wealth. But most societies also operate with more formalized methods of education, specific educational institutions which make it their business to train the rising generation in forms of acting and thinking regarded as essential by the society. We shall deal in this chapter with these formalized educational institutions, of which there are two in Nupe: the institution of the Koran school, concerned with Mohammedan religious teaching, and the institution of age-grade associations. The shortest definition of an educational institution is by the 'type' which it is meant to produce. In this sense we can say that Mohammedan religious education produces the Mallam, the Mohammedan scholar, and the age-grade associations the *zoon politikon* as understood in Nupe. We shall see that in certain respects both types of education can be identified with motives and aims underlying the political system, and thus with institutions devoted to what I have called in the heading of this chapter 'Education for Citizenship'.

MALLAM SCHOOLS

814 There are many degrees and varieties of Mohammedan learning. The
875 title 'Mallam'—*mân* in Nupe—which one encounters so often among the
554 Nupe, is by no means a safe guide. For the man who has gone through a few years' study of the Koran, having learned by heart a few *sura*; the sand-diviner or charm-seller who writes out verses from the Koran and sells them as amulets; the man who has acquired real learning and scholarship, and who can read and write in Arabic and possibly in Hausa—they all are called Mallam. Though the title is used indiscriminately, no Nupe ignores the essential difference between scholarship and the thin veneer of semi-learning. The Nupe distinguish two grades of learning: the lower grade is the study of the Koran (*kurani*), which consists mostly in the memorizing of prayers and whole pages and chapters from the Koran; the higher grade is called *kpikpe*, knowledge, or *litafi* (Hausa), book, and consists in the study of Arabic and the careful reading of the Koran and the better-known commentaries. The most advanced scholars would study, in addition to these books, also the historical records of the Nigerian Emirates which have been compiled (in Hausa, written in Arabic script) by scholars of former days. Only a student of 'knowledge' can claim to be a 'real' Mallam. While there are

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hundreds of Mallams of the lower grade, there are few real scholars, and they are well known and highly esteemed. These scholars will occupy that most influential position which a Mohammedan culture accords to the men of learning.[1] Their advice will be sought by friends and strangers, in matters spiritual or profane.[2] The important political and religious offices of judge, scribe, and Imam at the town mosque are open to them. Some become attached to a noble household as 'private chaplain'. Royal princes and noblemen will seek their friendship, give them their daughters in marriage without bride-price, regarding marriage with a Mallam as *sádaka*, pious alms. Such is, the Nupe say, the *cinwa katũ*, the Greatness of Learning. To some extent, however, the high reputation of the learned profession is reflected also in the persons of lesser erudition. Learning is, after all, relative. And a Mallam of very inferior scholarship judged by Bida standards, may be revered as a fount of knowledge in a small half-pagan village. These Mallams in the villages are frequently supported by the people and receive annual gifts of crops as *dzankά*, tithe.

The Mallams are, above all, teachers. They teach both children and adults, the former the Koran and the latter 'knowledge'. Every Mallam may, besides, be called in to perform a marriage ceremony or to officiate at a funeral—services for which they are remunerated according to their status and reputation. A few are well-to-do and own land, which is worked by their sons and pupils or, in some cases, by wage-labour. But most Mallams practise, in addition to teaching, some other occupation, which may or may not be associated with their scholarly profession, to supplement the meagre income of a Koran teacher. Some write out and illuminate pages of the Koran, or copy Arabic manuscripts, for sale. You can buy a sheet of this sort, very beautifully illuminated, for 5*d.* on the Bida market; more ambitious scribes would sell a whole copy of the Koran and receive for it—the work of five months—£1. Students of 'knowledge' eagerly buy these copies and use them in their studies. Other Mallams, again, embroider gowns, make straw hats or saddle-cloths, or do tailoring.

The size and standard of the Koran schools varies as widely as the status and standard of learning of the Mallams. You find 'schools' with two little boys for pupils, and these close relations of the teacher; and you find others—the schools of famous Bida scholars—the classrooms of which (as a rule the *katamba* in the Mallam's house) are crowded with pupils. The teachers are very jealous of the reputation of their school. When I was a regular visitor to Bida Koran schools the Mallam of one which I had not yet visited came to me complaining that I had left out his school, and quoted as reference a Bida Mallam of very high standing who was a special friend of mine. In the large Koran schools the Mallam himself teaches only the adult students of 'knowledge', while the elementary teaching is carried out by his sons or certain advanced pupils.

[1] Bida learning has a great reputation even outside Nupe; Mallams from Bida have been given important posts in other countries, and several Bida Koran teachers have established flourishing schools in Ilorin.

[2] One aspect of this spiritual advice is divining, which, as we have seen, plays an important part even in such political activities as the election of a high officer of state or the preparation for war.

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814 Certain progressive Bida Mallams include the teaching of Hausa and elementary arithmetic in their syllabus, and many adults, traders and other native business men, attend their classes to acquire knowledge so invaluable to their trade.[1] In certain Bida schools you will find young girls being taught together with boys. They come from the families of the nobility, which, conscientious Mohammedans, insist on elementary [562] religious instruction being extended also to women. Girls, however, are only taught the Koran, and do not study 'knowledge'.

Adult students, specially those who study the Koran or 'knowledge' for their edification, following another profession besides, visit the house of the teacher only for their lessons, which take place mostly in the evenings, once or twice a week, or even at longer intervals, according to the leisure which their occupation allows them.[2] Young pupils who live in the neighbourhood attend their classes daily while living with their family. Pupils whose family live some distance away will stay in the house of the teacher as members of his household.

● 815 The teacher of the Koran may not demand special payment for the
814 tuition; according to Mohammedan principles religious instruction must be free—*ebo albarka*, 'for the sake of blessing'. The wealthy Mallam, in fact, scorns all such payments as contrary to the spirit of religion. The poorer Mallam depends on what the family of the pupil offers him as *sádaka*, alms: a penny or twopence every two months, or a bundle of grain (worth 9*d.* or 1*s.*) once a year. Even these small gifts are very irregular; in the school of a Bida Mallam of good reputation, whose pupils numbered thirteen, half of the parents had sent nothing for over a year. Sometimes it happens that a boy's father dies while the boy is still studying, and his relations are unwilling to pay for his education. In this case the Mallam will continue to teach the orphan, let him live in his house and give him food and clothing, again *ebo albarka* only. Koran teachers in the country are worse off than their colleagues in Bida. In Kacha a Mallam who taught Hausa and arithmetic in addition to the Koran and 'knowledge', and who had eight young and fifteen adult students, received no payment from his students except an occasional gift of kola-nuts. If he asked for money, the students would indignantly threaten to leave and to seek another teacher. But both poor and wealthy Mallams receive a final gift from the parents of the student who has completed his studies, either money (in Bida), between 5*s.* and 10*s.*, or (in the village) grain or a goat. The teachers can also obtain a certain indirect remuneration by letting their pupils work for them. School-work does not take up the whole day, nor every day in the week. In their

[1] The Education Department in Bida has arranged special evening classes for these enterprising Koran school teachers, and gives them also certain practical assistance, for example, by supplying them with blackboards. This scheme of adult education is of considerable value in the spreading of elementary education among that section of the population which has not had the advantage of education in the Government schools.

[2] Students in a Koran school in Kacha, who were canoe-men by profession, [605] attended the school whenever they returned to Kacha from their voyages, interrupting their classes for weeks and months at a time when they were out on a canoe expedition.

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spare time the boys will help in the house or on the farm, or sometimes in the handicrafts which their teachers practise.

The students of 'knowledge' pay nothing for the tuition. But they have studied the Koran with the same Mallam under whom they are now studying 'knowledge'; and they will send their children again to his school, or to the school of his sons. Thus reputations are built up and firm links established between families of Koran teachers and families which patronize their school. There are Mallam families in Bida which have been teaching three generations of the same families. For the sons of famous Mallams will follow the profession of their father. Many also intermarry with other Mallam families. They carry on the reputation for scholarship won by their fathers and families, and thus help to build up the dynasties of Mallams, of which there are many in Bida and Nupe.

As teaching implies so meagre and irregular an income one might ask how it happens that certain Mallams become well-to-do, and even join the wealthy landowning class. These Mallams do not come from the families of the hereditary or office nobility. Although many men of this class study the Koran and 'knowledge', and proudly call themselves Mallams, they do not adopt the teaching profession, but remain amateurs, noble *dilettanti*. Sometimes a Mallam who in the past attained one of the official positions open to Mohammedan scholars has laid the foundation of the wealth of the family. Another has benefited from the close association as the 'guide, philosopher, and friend' of an influential personage—a clientship of more exalted order—and received land and wealth through the help of his patron. It is, for example, customary for all marriage services in the royal family—a most lucrative office—to be held by the Mallam who is attached to the house of the *Shaba*; or at all funeral services of the royal house the *Liman*, the head of the Mohammedan clergy, will officiate. However, wealthy Mallams are rare. Most Mohammedan scholars are poor, or at least unable to maintain themselves by their religious and educational work alone. But poverty is no impediment to scholarly reputation; nor does it detract from the honour of the profession. In fact, ordinary people will never call in a titled or even wealthy Mallam to perform a marriage or funeral service; they invariably prefer a Mallam of the *tálaka* class. A 'great Mallam is too weighty', they explain; they want a man whom they can offer a small *sádaka* as fee.

Among the Mallams of the town a certain loose economic co-operation exists, which comes into play at all such ceremonial occasions. At large marriage ceremonies or funerals several Mallams may be called in to assist the Mallam who is officiating. They will also divide part of the money which they receive for their services among their other colleagues in the same town quarter. Or the family which celebrates the ceremony will send *sádaka* to all the Mallams in the neighbourhood. This practice of communal benefits does not involve any closer or more formalized co-operation among the Mallams. The wide diversity between them with regard to social status, wealth, and standard of learning forbids any more strongly pronounced appreciation of their commonness beyond that fluid unity embodied in the fact that they all work with

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875 their brains, and represent, in a society of peasants, craftsmen, and traders, the intelligentsia. This will become even clearer when we examine the motley rising generation of Mallams.

874 Koran teaching begins as a rule in early youth, when the child is 6 or even 5 years old. The teaching of the Koran itself is reckoned to take five to ten years. Some pupils learn quicker than others, and in one school I found a boy of 13 already studying 'knowledge', while one of 17 was still worrying his way through the Koran. But on the whole this elementary stage is considered mere routine work which most students can master in the given time. The teaching of 'knowledge', on the other hand, depends entirely on talent and individual inclination. Pupils may be eager enough to try, but will give up later when they discover that 'they have no head for it' (a literal translation of the Nupe phrase). Nor can the time taken by these higher studies be fixed precisely. Ten to fifteen years is an average estimate—at least, after fifteen years' study one is reckoned to have become 'fully a Mallam'. But only prospective teachers will take this advanced course systematically, and continue their study year after year. The *dilettanti* pursue their studies much more irregularly and leisurely, and students of 35 or more may often be seen in the schools of the teachers of 'knowledge'.

874 The Mallam schools receive pupils from every class and every walk of life. I have compiled some figures to illustrate the social origin of the 565 pupils of Bida Koran schools:

Father's profession	*Mallams*	*Traders*	*Farmers*	*Guild-craftsmen*	*Individual craftsmen*	*Nobility*	*Clerks, messengers, &c.*	*Total*
Studying: Koran	40	16	30	6	20	22	8	151
'Knowledge'	28	4	2	..	20	8	10	72

That the sons of Mallams are in a majority is not surprising, nor that individual craftsmen and members of the nobility should come next in number. Of the twenty-eight sons of Mallams who were studying 'knowledge' six were going to adopt a different profession (of messengers, clerks, labourers, or servants to Europeans). Of the forty-four other students of 'knowledge' sixteen were going to become Koran teachers either in Bida or in the villages. These sixteen prospective Mallams included, incidentally, the two farmers' sons. None of the sons of guild-craftsmen took up teaching as a profession: a proof of the strong organization of these 'closed professions'. The large number of farmers who send their boys to Bida Koran schools may appear surprising; and even more so that a certain number of them should take up the study of the Koran professionally (for among the boys who are at present studying the Koran a few are likely to become Koran teachers). One example may serve: a boy of 13, the only son of a farmer, was studying to become a Mallam. He was well aware that at the death of his father the land would be lost to his family. Nevertheless he would not return to farm-work. His father had made him a Mallam, and that was all there was to it. Again and again, in similar cases, I was told: 'We are no longer strong enough to work on the land', or 'After all, is the profession of a Mallam

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not as good as that of a farmer?' There is no evidence, incidentally, that physical disability, an ailment which might impair their working capacity, is a reason for sending boys to Mallam schools. The choice of the Mallam profession is, in the full sense of the word, a free choice of profession.[1]

The Mallam schools both in Bida and in the peasant districts are steadily increasing. The Nigerian Census mentions over 1,000 Koran schools in Niger Province, most of which are found in Nupe Emirate. I have estimated that Bida town possesses over 100 Koran schools, with over 1,000 pupils (out of a population of 24,000, with 5,000 male children). Kacha has fifteen Koran schools, Kutigi, a much more primitive and semi-pagan village, six, of which two already give higher instruction. This spreading of Mohammedan education leaves no doubt that parents increasingly desire their children to receive the benefits of Mohammedan learning. We have to accept this as a general trend in modern Nupe society, not so much towards true education—which few of the boys will ever attain—as towards the higher social status—the status of a leisured-class intelligentsia—which the position of a Mallam, rightly or wrongly, suggests.

Earlier in this book I have referred to the profession of Mallams as one of the mechanisms of social mobility. I have also called Mohammedan education, by means of which the religion and, indirectly, the whole spiritual background of the ruling classes is diffused throughout the country, one of the 'binding forces' of the Nupe state. Here we have found concrete evidence to support these statements. Let me summarize the main conclusions which we can draw from the present discussion. First, the profession of Mallams comprises contrasts of wealth and rank, which occur nowhere else in the framework of a single profession. The only common feature is that of a life without manual work, and of a certain social status raised above that of the ordinary commoner. Secondly, the Mallam profession is the only profession which we discovered in Nupe which is not ruled by the motive of material gains. On the contrary, people will sacrifice even the security of work on the land for the meagre and insecure income that goes with the rise in status and the attainment of the life of the leisured class.

AGE-GRADE ASSOCIATIONS

The Nupe name for age-grade association is *ena gbarúfuši*, lit. 'society' or 'association of the young men'.[2] Although nearly every Nupe boy or

[1] I had wondered whether there was any relation between the professional choice and the size of the family, whether perhaps in large families a son would be more likely to study for Mallam than in small families, where every member would be needed for farm-work. Then again, I thought it possible that in these days of the breaking-up of the family-unit orphans would be placed more readily in Mallam schools. Neither correlation, however, is true—as is shown in these figures: of 32 students of farming stock 9 were only sons, 10 were one of two sons, 9 had brothers who also studied the Koran, and 4 were orphans.

[2] Informants who have picked up a few words of pidgin-English translated *ena* as 'company'.

2: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1954
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794 who started the great wave of Islamization, were probably as liberal or unorthodox in their attitude to women. So that the 562 Nupe would have received their new creed already remodelled by the donors, and the true contrast would be, not between orthodox Islam and the Nupe version, but between the former and African Islam.

794 To turn to the other aspects of the Moslem 'way of life', first, to the high value placed on scholarship. Even the most humble 875 follower of Islam is aware of it. Tuition in the creed and *jī katū* (reading, book-knowledge in general) are to him almost one and the same thing; and greater religious perfection coincides with wider learning. The title mallam, 'scholar', freely accorded to the pious, already indicates the trend of thought. One mallam friend of mine expressed it aptly when he spoke of the *ciɣwa katū*, the 'greatness of learning', which makes any Mohammedan scholar equal to the other great ones in the country—rankholders, noblemen, or wealthy landowners. Not that the mallam is necessarily poor or a commoner; many mallams are wealthy, and many members of the titled aristocracy pride themselves on being scholars as well. But the professional scholar does not require the badge or rank nor the backing of wealth to be granted the privileges of high status. His learning makes him the companion of the 'great ones'; his ministration at naming ceremonies, weddings or burials opens him their houses; and even a poor mallam can marry into rich or noble families if his scholarly repute is high; for in this case the bride's father will defray the costs of the brideprice, counting this expenditure as a pious gift of alms.[1]

There are, of course, degrees of learning, and hence distinctions in the status of mallams. In largely pagan villages anyone who has learned to recite a few *surat* of the Qoran and performs his daily prayers is called a mallam; in the Mohammedan capital the name is reserved for those who also teach the Qoran, though the adepts in the art of sand-divining and the sellers of charms are equally included in that class. Mostly a further distinction is drawn between the simple, humble mallam, who knows only the Qoran (or, more often, only small portions of it) and the true scholar, who must have studied *litafi* (books) or *kpikpe* (knowledge) as well. Men of the latter class read eagerly and widely, and acquire books where they can or copy out rare manuscripts. Ignoring, however, the few mallams who practice as judges and have studied the various relevant legal digests and commentaries, the reading of these 'learned men' tends to be indiscriminate and their 'know-

[1] The social position of the mallams and the whole question of Moslem learning and tuition has been fully discussed in *A Black Byzantium*; see especially pp. 102, 378–83.

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ledge' a miscellany of incongruous items. Often the 'books' they get hold of are merely odd assortments of bits of literature, the same volume perhaps containing an extract on marriage law, a page or two on astrology, a treatise on the human body, and a fragment of some Hausa chronicle. Nor does the specific knowledge of Moslem theology fare any better. Again it is a medley of incongruous bits of information and in no way approaches the orthodox teaching of Islam.

The further down you pass in the scale of Nupe Mohammedan scholarship, the more confused and fragmentary becomes this knowledge. Take this summary account of creation and the powers of God which was given to me by one of the 'simple' mallams: 'Mohammed was the first man on earth; the devil (*Sheitan*) sends illness and misfortunes; after death, the good people become kindly spirits (*aljénu*), while evil persons are turned into dust'. Which last statement was the only reference to the ethical sanctions of Islam I encountered in Nupe; for hell or heaven or the last judgment are never mentioned. The notion, incidentally, that Mohammed was the first man is widespread; but otherwise the ideas about creation and the universe are far from uniform. Here is a different and fuller account, recorded from another mallam of this class: Formerly, when all the people lived together in the same place, there existed 'little gods' (*sokó letengi*), whom God (*Allah*) sent down to earth to take away the souls (*rayi*) of the persons whose life was nearing its end. But the people grew frightened at this mysterious and unannounced demise and tried to evade it by scattering over the earth. So God introduced a new kind of death, heralded by illness, or overcoming man suddenly, through lightning or other natural disasters. These 'little gods' are the *malaika* (the Arabic *mal'ak*, 'angels'). In addition to the messengers of death there exist also *malaika* who bring rain, cause the crops to grow, and watch over man; the chief one amongst them is Jibelelu (Gabriel); others are Mikailu, Ismailu, Ibrahimu, though my informant did not pretend to know them all.

The knowledge possessed by the 'true' mallam is hardly less unorthodox, even though it is fuller and more ambitious. The following text was dictated to me by a gifted pupil of the most famous mallam of Bida and fully conformed to the master's teaching.

'In the beginning there were Adama and Mother Adā. They had three daughters, Mureamu [Miriam, Mary], Fatima [daughter of Mohammed], and Barkisa [Bilkis, the Queen of Sheba], and numerous sons. These were all prophets. God then divided the world into pagans and Moslems. The greatest king of the pagans

4: Temple G-4 (no date) 1922

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853 This is tested by an ant (chinaka) being placed therein, and
787 if it drowns the child is given to a wet-nurse and the mother is medically treated. This custom is particularly prevalent amongst riverain Nupe.

855 Subsequent children are thoroughly spoilt until they reach
543 the age of three or four years when, amongst the well-to-do, at all events, the mother is thought to be too fond to make a good guardian. Girls are usually weaned at the age of three years,
[847] boys not until they are four. The children may, therefore, be
955 sent right away to a boarding school for some ten years, or
874 the relations may take them to a day school, arranging their
593 marriages, and in fact divorcing them so entirely from their own parents that the only connection left is inheritance. If the grandfather is alive he distributes the children amongst their uncles and aunts on the male side, generally in order of seniority. They call them father and mother, and when grown-up would visit them and give them money before going to their true parents. The foster-parents would equally go to their foster children for support in their old age, and only to their own children in the last resort.

874 A successful Mallam will have a school containing fifty or sixty children, amongst whom he keeps up a rigid discipline by means of the rod, and if a child attempts to run away it is put into leg-irons. There are whole holidays on Thursdays and Fridays, but on working days the hours are 4 to 6 and 7 to 11 a.m., and 2 to 4 and 7 to 8 p.m. Day scholars miss the first two hours. The children learn the Koran, and reading and writing in Arabic characters, then their own language, and then Haussa; sewing, and at a later stage sums. Boys and girls work and play together, but when girls reach a marriageable age they are taught by the Mallam's wives. There are no regular holidays, and children remain for some ten years without a break. When they leave the school the Mallam
● [873] receives a fee of 20,000 cowries, in addition to which there may or may not be complimentary presents given. The young scholar, on reaching home, goes to salute the Sarki and all elders, and receives a dash from each to celebrate the home-coming.

643 The same customs that apply to the commoner apply to the
874 Chiefs and Emirs. His children are also sent to school, and he
955 never keeps his first-born. In questions of marriage it is he
581 who takes the first step, and he will often give his daughters in marriage to the merest talaka, and may even marry a peasant girl himself without incurring reproach.

642 The Emir of Bida keeps up an elaborate state. He sends food to all visitors to his capital and provides them with accommodation. He summons Chiefs to audiences, and holds a levee in the palace courtyard every Friday morning between 7 and 8 a.m., where all or any of his subjects assemble to salute him but he does not enter into conversation with anyone then.

4: Temple G-4 (no date) 1922

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He may go out to war himself, but more often puts the operations under the War-Chief, Sarkin Yaki, who is himself advised by the Wari-Yaki, a man chosen by the Mallamai for this purpose, and often of so humble a position that the warriors do not know who he is. The Sarkin Yaki, however, obeys him invariably, and indeed it is the Mallamai who direct when and where an attack should be delivered or a retreat made. If the Sarkin Yaki should be killed in war, the army retires to await another appointment by the Emir. It was the custom for the two eldest daughters of the Sarkin Nupe to go to war, each arrayed in two thick rigas, a cummerbund, and carrying a sword and spear. They had large followings, for they gave a big proportion of the spoils to their retinue, but they followed the direction of the Sarkin Yaki. No woman was allowed to accompany them into battle, but many of the sex were discontented with the restriction, and, in consequence, the practice became unpopular amongst the Nupe men. The general feeling became so strong that on the death of the Chief, Umoru Majigi, in 1884, these ladies were no longer allowed to go out to war. Their names were Atiba and Wodiko, names invariably given to the Chief's two eldest daughters. In other respects they lived ordinarily, and were married, but their husbands would never fight in the same war with their wives. Each Chieftain brings his following, and there are bodies of horsemen and footmen, the former armed with spears, the latter with bows and arrows. A war-camp is formed some seven to ten miles from where hostilities are expected to take place, and here the stores and women are left. The Mallamai and a large number of civilian hangers-on advance to the verge of the fight, and wait till success is attained, when they dash in to secure a share of the spoil, the Mallamai giving the word when it is safe to do so. Needless to say their presence is often resented. Envoys may be sent from one army to another in perfect safety, protected by the waving of a white flag, or of green branches; they generally dress in white for additional surety.

Before any campaign is undertaken the Emir consults a Mallam gifted with the power of prophecy, and he says whether the results would be good or bad. A hundred years ago the advent of a fair race from the west was foretold by the prophets in a MS. still extant, and the resistance to their arms was forbidden. That was why the present Emir of Bida and his family, together with all the Mallamai, refused to come out against the British. There are some prophets who are above worldly interest and desire, and others who give advice for 1,000 cowries, or perhaps sixpence. It is a special art in which they receive instruction as youths, and there are books on the subject. The Mallams are consulted on such questions as marriage, trade ventures, and sickness. They look on the ground for about ten minutes and

4: Temple G-4 (no date) 1922
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875 787 sometimes consult a book before speaking; if it concerns anyone who is absent and unknown to the Mallam, the questioner lays his hand on the ground, at which the Mallam gazes.

In the case of illness the Is-sabi is consulted, as if death is certain it would be mere waste to spend money on doctors and on medicine, as is otherwise done.

759 Some doctors have acquired great reputations, and people travel long distances to consult them. As they are not paid unless they effect a cure, they will not undertake hopeless cases.

764 766 When a man dies he is buried in the compound in a rectangular-shaped grave, which has three depths, one within the other. The body, which is wrapped in a large new cloth, is laid on a mat on one side in the deepest part, the centre, facing eastwards; wood is placed over it to prevent the earth touching the corpse. [554] Some of the more important men have a special burial-room in their compound, but with this exception it is the same for men, women, and children. Those who die of small-pox or who commit suicide are, however, taken out and thrown into the bush by dogarai, for no one else will touch them. If a body is being carried home it may never be laid down, so a large number [184] of bearers are provided to relieve one another. The pagan Nupe pour beer upon the grave, and offer prayers to the spirits.*

765 For seven days after a death the brothers, sons, daughters, and other near relations and friends, come and sit with the bereaved principal from six in the morning till six in the evening. Dirty white clothes constitute mourning apparel, and this is worn for children, parents and spouse.

765 768 A widower may go out after seven days and work a little, but not much till forty days have elapsed, when he may resume his ordinary habits, though he continues to wear white for five months. Widows, however, remain shut up in the compound for five months, during which time they may not dress their hair, or remove their sandals, or see any man. This over they remarry, and can exercise their own choice as to a groom, being allowed forty days within which to make their arrangements. By the end of this time the law of the country insists on marriage, an old woman getting an old husband, for no one will bury an unmarried woman and, of course, she has no home where she has a right to lie. It is a terror to the widows during their enforced five months of singleness lest they may fall ill or die, for even sickness, following so hard on the tragedy of death, would be considered a sign of evil, and possibly witchdom, so the woman would find difficulty in securing another husband.

768 The heirs are responsible for all debts incurred by the deceased, whose property is divided between his eldest son, his other

* Sapke and Mokwa.